

# THE COMPASSIONATE SAVIOR



By Max Lucado

## Introduction

*What words come to mind when you think of Jesus? Messiah? Emmanuel?  
Perhaps you think of Bread of Life . . . Carpenter . . . Nazarene . . . Lamb of God . . .  
Prince of Peace . . . Lord of Lords . . . Light of the World . . . Shepherd . . .*

*In scripture, over 800 names and titles refer to Jesus. Yet, one name that doesn't appear in scripture is "Compassionate Savior." But don't those two words say it all? "Compassionate Savior" defines all the other names. Every second of his earthly existence, based on a desire to save the lost, was bound in compassion. Compassion for his followers, compassion for those in pain, compassion for those who were blind to his truth.*

*See his tears for the hurting; hear his words of comfort, as we study together  
"The Compassionate Savior."*

## Chapter One

\* \* \* \* \*

# THE GOD WHO FEEDS MY SOUL

What bread is to hunger, Jesus claims to be for the soul.

Travel to almost any country and sit in any restaurant and they'll serve you bread. Bread is a staple. If the poor have nothing, they have bread. If the rich have everything, they still have bread. Bread is not regional food nor a national dish. No country claims to be the exclusive source of bread. It may be in the form of a tortilla in Mexico or a bagel in New York, but bread is available everywhere. So is Christ. He is not bound by boundaries. No country claims him. No regions own him. No nation monopolizes him. He is everywhere at the same time. Universally available.

Bread is eaten daily. Some fruits are available only in season. Some drinks are made only at holidays. Not so with bread. And no so with Jesus. He should be brought to our table every day. We let him nourish our hearts, not just in certain months or on special events, but daily.

Bread is served in many forms. It's toasted, jellied, buttered, flattened, and grilled. It can be a sandwich, sweet roll, hot-dog bun, croissant, or dinner roll. Bread can meet many needs. So can Jesus. He adapts himself to meet our needs. He has a word for the lonely as well as for the popular. He has help for the physically ill and the emotionally ill. If your vision is clear, he can help you. If your vision is cloudy, he can help you. Jesus can meet each need.

Can you see why Jesus called himself the Bread of Life?

I can think of one other similarity. Consider how bread is made. Think about the process. Wheat grows in the field, and then it is cut down, winnowed, and ground into flour. It passes through the fire of the oven and is then distributed around the world. Only by this process does bread become bread. Each step is essential. Eliminate the plant, and you have no wheat. Eliminate the winnowing, and you have no flour. Eliminate the fire, and you have no product. Eliminate the distribution, and you have no satisfaction. Each step is essential.

Now, consider Jesus. He grew up as a "small plant before the Lord" (Isa. 53:2).

One of millions of boys on the planet. One of thousands in Israel. One of dozens in Nazareth. Indistinguishable from the person down the street or the child in the next chair. Had you seen him as a youngster, you wouldn't have thought he was the Son of God. You might have thought him polite or courteous or diligent, but God on earth? Not a chance. He was just a boy. One of hundreds. Like a staff of wheat in the wheat field.

But like wheat, he was cut down. Like chaff he was pounded and beaten. "He was wounded for the wrong we did: he was crushed for the evil we did" (Isa. 53:5).

And, like bread, he passed through the fire. On the cross he passed through the fire of God's anger, not because of his sin, but because of ours. "The Lord has put on him the punishment for all the evil we have done" (Isa. 53:6).

Jesus experienced each part of the process of making bread: the growing, the pounding, the firing. And just as each is necessary for bread, each was also necessary for Christ to become the bread of life. “The Christ must suffer these things before he enters his glory” (Luke 24:26).

The next part of the process, the distribution, Christ leaves with us. We are the distributors. We can’t force people to eat the bread, but we can make sure they have it. Yet, for some reason, we are reluctant to do so. It’s much easier to stay in the bakery than to get into the truck. As the following parable illustrates, we may not even know how to give the bread when some request it.

## THE BEGGAR AND THE BREAD

A beggar came and sat before me. “I want bread,” he said.

“How wise you are,” I assured him. “Bread is what you need. And you have come to the right bakery.” So I pulled my cookbook down from my shelf and began to tell him all I knew about bread.

I spoke of flour and wheat, of grain and barley. My knowledge impressed even me as I cited the measurements and recipe. When I looked up, I was surprised to see he wasn’t smiling. “I just want bread,” he said.

“How wise are you.” I applauded his choice. “Follow me, and I’ll show you our bakery.” Down the hollowed halls I guided him, pausing to point out the rooms where the dough is prepared and the ovens where the bread is baked.

“No one has such facilities. We have bread for every need. But here is the best part,” I proclaimed as I pushed open two swinging doors. “This is our room of inspiration.” I knew he was moved as we stepped into the auditorium full of stained-glass windows.

The beggar didn’t speak. I understood his silence. With my arm around his shoulder, I whispered, “It overwhelms me as well.” I then leaped to the podium and struck my favorite pose behind the lectern. “People come from miles to hear me speak. Once a week my workers gather and I read to them the recipe from the cookbook of life.”

By now the beggar had taken a seat on the front row. I knew what he wanted. “Would you like to hear me?”

“No,” he said, “but I would like some bread.”

“How wise you are,” I replied. And I led him to the front door of the bakery. “What I have to say next is very important,” I told him as we stood outside. “Up and down this street you will find many bakeries. But take heed; they don’t serve the true bread. I know of one who adds two spoons of salt rather than one. I know of another whose oven is three degrees too hot. They may call it bread.” I warned, “but it’s not according to the book.”

The beggar turned and began walking away. “Don’t you want bread?” I asked him.

He stopped, looked back at me, and struggled, “I guess I lost my appetite.”

I shook my head and returned to my office. “What a shame,” I said to myself. “The world just isn’t hungry for true bread anymore.”

I don’t know what is more incredible: that God packages the bread of life in the wrapper of a country carpenter or that he gives us the keys to the delivery truck. Both moves seem pretty risky. The carpenter did his part, however. And who knows-we may just learn to do ours.

## Chapter Two

\* \* \* \* \*

# THE GOD OF GREAT GRACE

It's not easy watching Jesus wash these feet.

To see the hands of God massaging the toes of men is, well . . . it's not right. The disciples should be washing his feet. Nathanael should pour the water. Andrew should carry the towel. But they don't. No one does. Rather than serve, they argue over which one is the greatest (Luke 22:24).

What disappointment their words must have brought Jesus.

"I'm the number one apostle."

"No, I'm much more spiritual than you."

"You guys are crazy. I brought more people to hear Jesus than anyone."

As they argue, the basin sits in the corner, untouched. The towel lies on the floor, unused. The servant's clothing hangs on the wall, unworn. Each disciple sees these things. Each disciple knows their purpose. But no one moves, except Jesus. As they bicker, he stands.

But he doesn't speak. He removes his robe and takes the servant's wrap off of the wall. Taking the pitcher, he pours the water into the basin. He kneels before them with the basin and sponge and begins to wash. The towel that covers his waist is also the towel that dries their feet.

It's not right.

Isn't it enough that these hands will be pierced in the morning? Must they scrub grime tonight? And the disciples . . . do they deserve to have their feet washed? Their affections have waned; their loyalties have wavered.

We want to say . . .

Look at John, Jesus. This is the same John who told you to destroy the city. The same John who demanded that you censure a Christ-follower who wasn't in your group. Why are you washing his feet?

And James! Skip James. He wanted the seat of honor. He and his brother wanted special treatment. Don't give it to him. Give him the towel. Let him wash his own feet. Let him learn a lesson.

And while you are at it, Jesus, you might as well skip Philip. He told you there wasn't enough food to feed the large crowd. You tested him, and he flunked. You gave him the chance, and he blew it.

And Peter? Sure, these are the feet that walked on water, but they're also the feet that thrashed about in the deep. He didn't believe you. Sure he confessed you as the Christ, but he's also the one who told you that you didn't have to die. He doesn't deserve to have his feet washed.

None of them do. When you were about to be stoned in Nazareth, did they come to your defense? When the Pharisees took up rocks to kill you, did they volunteer to take your place? You know what they have done.

And what's more, you know what they are about to do!

You can already hear them snoring in the garden. They say they'll stay awake, but they won't. You'll sweat blood; they'll saw logs.

You can hear them sneaking away from the soldiers. They make promises tonight. They'll make tracks tomorrow.

Look around the table, Jesus. Out of the twelve, how many will stand with you in Pilate's court? How many will share with you the Roman whip? And when you fall under the weight of the cross, which disciple will be close enough to spring to your side and carry your burden?

None of them will. Not one. A stranger will be called because no disciple will be near.

Don't wash their feet, Jesus. Tell them to wash yours.

That's what we want to say. Why? Because of the injustice? Because we don't want to see our King behaving as a servant? God on his hands and knees, his hair hanging around his face? Do we object because we don't want to see God washing feet?

Or do we object because we don't want to do the same?

Stop and think for a minute. Don't we have some people like the disciples in our world?

Double-tongued promise-breakers. Fair-weather friends. What they said and what they did are two different things. Oh, maybe they didn't leave you alone at the cross, but maybe they left you alone with the bills . . .

Or your question.

Or your illness.

Or maybe you were just left at the altar,

Or in the cold,

Holding the bag.

Vows forgotten.

Contract abandoned.

Logic says: "Put up your fists."

Jesus says: "Fill up the basin."

Logic says: "Bloody his nose."

Jesus says: "Wash his feet."

Logic says: "She doesn't deserve it."

Jesus says: "You're right, but you don't, either."

I don't understand how God can be so kind to us, but he is. He kneels before us, takes our feet in his hands, and washes them. Please understand that in washing the disciples' feet, Jesus is washing ours. You and I are in this story. We are at the table. That's us being cleansed, not from our dirt, but from our sins.

And the cleansing is not just a gesture; it is a necessity. Listen to what Jesus said: "If I don't wash your feet, you are not one of my people" (John 13:8).

Jesus did not say, "if you don't wash your feet." Why not? Because we cannot cleanse our own filth. We cannot remove our own sin. Our feet must be in his hands.

Don't miss the meaning here. To place our feet in the basin of Jesus is to place the filthiest parts of our lives into his hands. In the ancient East, people's feet were caked with mud and dirt. The servant of the feast saw to it that the feet were cleaned. Jesus is assuming the role of the servant. He will wash the grimeiest part of your life.

If you let him. The water of the Servant comes only when we confess that we are dirty. Only when we confess that we are caked with filth, that we have walked forbidden trails and followed the wrong paths.

We tend to be proud like Peter and resist. "I'm not that dirty, Jesus. Just sprinkle a few drops on me and I'll be fine."

What a lie! "If we say we have no sin, we are fooling ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).

We will never be cleansed until we confess we are dirty. We will never be pure until we admit we are filthy. And we will never be able to wash the feet of those who have hurt us until we allow Jesus, the one we have hurt, to wash ours.

You see, that is the secret of forgiveness. You will never forgive anyone more than God has already forgiven you. Only by letting him wash your feet can you have strength to wash those of another.

Still hard to imagine? Is it still hard to consider the thought of forgiving the one who hurt you?

If so, go one more time to the room. Watch Jesus as he goes from disciple to disciple. Can you see him? Can you hear the water splash? Can you hear him shuffle on the floor to the next person? Good. Keep that image.

John 13:12 says, "when he had finished washing their feet . . ."

Please note, he finished washing their feet. That means he left no one out. Why is that important? Because that also means he washed the feet of Judas. Jesus washed the feet of his betrayer. He gave his traitor equal attention. In just a few hours Judas's feet would guide the Roman guard to Jesus. But at this moment they are caressed by Christ.

That's not to say it was easy for Jesus.

That's not to say it is easy for you.

That is to say that God will never call you to do what he hasn't already done.

## Chapter Three

\* \* \* \* \*

# THE GOD WHO KNOWS YOUR NAME

Behold a hero of the west: the cowboy.

He rears his horse to a stop on the rim of the canyon. He shifts his weight in his saddle, weary from the cattle trail. One finger pushes his hat up on his head. One jerk of the kerchief reveals a sun-leathered face.

A thousand head of cattle pass behind him. A thousand miles of trail lie before him. A thousand women would love to hold him. But none do. None will. He lives to drive cattle, and he drives cattle to live. He is honest in poker and quick with a gun. Hard riding. Slow talking. His best friend is his horse, and his strength is his grit.

He needs no one. He is a cowboy. The American hero.

Behold a hero in the Bible: the shepherd.

On the surface he appears similar to the cowboy. He, too, is rugged. He sleeps where the jackals howl and works where the wolves prowl. Never off duty. Always alert. Like the cowboy, he makes his roof the stars and the pasture his home.

But that is where the similarities end.

The shepherd loves his sheep. It's not that the cowboy doesn't appreciate the cow; it's just that he doesn't know the animal. He doesn't even want to. Have you ever seen a picture of a cowboy caressing a cow? Have you ever seen a shepherd caring for a sheep? Why the difference?

Simple. The cowboy leads the cow to slaughter. The shepherd leads the sheep to be shorn. The cowboy wants the meat of the cow. The shepherd wants the wool of the sheep. And so they treat the animals differently.

The cowboy drives the cattle. The shepherd leads the sheep.

A herd has a dozen cowboys. A flock has one shepherd.

The cowboy wrestles, brands, herds, and ropes. The shepherd leads, guides, feeds, and anoints.

The cowboy knows the name of the trail hands. The shepherd knows the name of the sheep.

The cowboy whoops and hollers at the cows. The shepherd calls each sheep by name.



Aren't we glad Christ didn't call himself the Good Cowboy? But some do perceive God that way. A hard-faced, square-jawed ranch-hand from heaven who drives his church against its will to places it doesn't want to go.

But that's a wrong image. Jesus called himself the Good Shepherd. The Shepherd who knows his sheep by name and lays down his life for them. The Shepherd who protects, provides, and possesses his sheep. The Bible is replete with this picture of God.

"The Lord is my shepherd" (Ps. 23:1).

"We are your people, the sheep of your flock" (Ps. 79:13).

Shepherd of Israel, listen to us. You lead the people of Joseph like a flock" (Ps. 80:1).

"He is our God and we are the people he takes care of and the sheep that he tends" (Ps. 95:7).

"He made us, and we belong to him; we are his people, the sheep he tends" (Ps. 100:3).

The imagery is carried over to the New Testament.

"He is the shepherd who will risk his life to save the one straying sheep" (Luke 15:4).

"He has pity on people because they are like sheep without a shepherd" (Matt. 9:36).

"His disciples are his flock" (Luke 12:32).

"When the shepherd is attacked, the sheep are scattered" (Matt 26:31).

"He is the shepherd of the souls of men" (I Peter 2:25).

"He is the great shepherd of the sheep" (Heb. 12:30).

Eighty percent of Jesus' listeners made their living off the land. Many were shepherds. They lived on the mesa with the sheep. No flock ever grazed without a shepherd, and no shepherd was ever off duty. When sheep wandered, the shepherd found them. When they fell, he carried them. When they were hurt, he healed them.

Sheep aren't smart. They tend to wander into running creeks for water, then their wool grows heavy and they drown. They need a shepherd to lead them to "calm water" (Ps. 23:3). They have no natural defense—no claws, no horns, no fangs. They are helpless. Sheep need a shepherd with a "rod and . . . walking stick" (Ps. 23:4) to protect them. They have no sense of direction. They need someone to lead them "on paths that are right" (Ps. 23:3).

So do we. We, too, tend to be swept away by waters we should have avoided. We have no defense against the evil lion who prowls about seeking who he might devour. We, too, get lost. "We all have wandered away like sheep; each of us has gone his own way" (Isa. 53:6).

We need a shepherd. We don't need a cowboy to herd us; we need a shepherd to care for us and to guide us.

And we have one. One who know us by name.

I don't need to tell you why this is so important, do I? You know. Like me, you've probably been in a situation where someone forgot your name. Perhaps a situation where no one knew who you were-or even cared.

Not long ago my assistant, Karen Hill, underwent surgery. When she awoke in the recovery room, she could hear a fellow patient groaning. She heard a well-meaning nurse comforting him. "Settle down, Tom," she said. "Settle down." But still he moaned. The nurse returned. "It's all right, Tom. Just go with the pain." He was quiet for a few moments but then began groaning again. "It's okay, Tom. You'll be fine." Finally the patient spoke. With a low, painful voice he said, "My name's not Tom."

There was a moment of silence as the nurse picked up his chart. Then she said, "It's all right, Harry; it's all right."

It's never easy to be in a place where no one knows your name, but few of us know this as much as John Doe No. 24. His story, as recorded by the Associated Press, reads like this:

Unknown Since '45,  
John Doe Takes His  
Secret to the Grave  
Jacksonville, Ill.

The mystery of John Doe No. 24 outlived him. There were few clues when he was found, wandering the streets of Jacksonville in 1945, a deaf, blind teenager.

Since he was unable to speak had his relatives could not be found, he was placed in an institution. He became John Doe No. 24 because he was the twenty-fourth unidentified man in the state's mental health system. Officials believe he was sixty-four when he dies of a stroke at the Sharon Oaks nursing home in Peoria.

John Doe's caretakers believe diabetes made him lose his sight, and records indicate he was severely retarded. But workers remember a proud man, more intelligent than the standard tests showed. They remember the tantalizing hints to his identity-the way he would scrawl "Lewis" and his pantomimed wild accounts of foot-stomping jazz bars and circus parades. "It was so obvious from what he pantomimed that he had quite a life at one time," said Kim Cornwell, a caseworker. "Like my grandfather, he could probably tell funny stories. We just couldn't reach out enough to get them."

He had a straw hat he loved to wear and he took a backpack with his collection of rings, glasses and silverware with him everywhere. At Christmas parties he danced to vibrations from the music. Last Christmas the staff bought him a harmonica . . .

At a brief graveside service last Wednesday in Jacksonville, a woman asked if anyone had any words to say. No one did.

Somewhere in the darkness of John Doe No.24 there was a story. There was a name. There were memories of a mother who held him, a father who carried him.

Behind those sightless eyes were eyes that could see the past, and all we can do is wonder, What did they see? A wide-eye youngster eating popcorn at a circus? A jazz band in New Orleans?

No one will ever know. No one will know because he could never tell. He couldn't even speak his name. And on the day he died no one had words to say. What do you say when you bury a life no one knew?

It's easy to say this, but I wish I'd been there. I would have opened the Bible to the tenth chapter of the Gospel of John and read verse 3, "He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out."

It's not true that no one knew this man's name. God did . . . and God does. And it's wrong to say that this man never heard his name. Who knows how many times God spoke it to him through the years? In the silence. Through the dark. When we thought he couldn't hear, who is to say he wasn't hearing the only voice that matters?

The Good Shepherd knows each sheep by name. He's not a cowboy, and we aren't cattle. He doesn't brand us, and we're not on the way to the market. He guides, feeds, and anoints. And word has it that he won't quit until we reach the homeland.

## Chapter Four

\* \* \* \* \*

# THE GOD WHO WON'T LET YOU FALL

I would like to confess a fall. I've kept it secret long enough. I can't deny the stumble; nor can I dismiss the truth. I fell. There were witnesses to my slip. They can tell you. Graciously, they have told no one. Out of concern for my reputation, they kept the event a secret. But it has been a secret long enough. The time has come for my mistake to be shared.

I lost my footing at a family camp.

My daughters and I chose to climb a wall—a simulated rock climb. The wall is made of wood with occasional rock-shaped fingerholds bolted into the surface. For safety, the climber wears a harness around his waist. The harness is attached to a rope that runs up through a pulley and then down into the hand of a guide who secures it as the climber climbs.

I gave it a go. What's a fifty-foot for a middle-aged author? I gave the guide the "thumbs-up" and began. The first half of the trip I did well. About midway, however, I began to get tired. These hands are not accustomed to climbing.

With about twenty feet left to go. I honestly began to wonder if I would make it. I gave serious thought to telling the guide just to pull me up the rest of the way. My fingers were sore, and my legs were starting to tremble, and I was regretting every Big Mac I'd ever eaten, but the thought of surrender was lost in the cheers of my daughters who were already on the top.

So I gave it all I had. But all I had was not enough. My feet slipped, my hands slipped, and down I fell. I fell hard. But I didn't fall far. My guide had a firm hold on the rope. Because he was alert and because he was strong, my tumble lasted only a couple of seconds. I bounded and swung in the harness, suspended in midair. Everyone watching let out a sigh, and I gulped and resumed the climb.

Guess what I did when I made it to the top? Do you think I boasted? Do you think I bragged about conquering the wall? No way. I looked down at the one who kept me from falling. "Thanks, pal" I told him. I didn't pat myself on the back or raise my fist in triumph. I didn't ask everybody if they'd seen what I did. I did the only thing that was right: I said thanks to the one who held me.

Wish that all my tumbles were so simple. So brief. So harmless. They haven't been. I've been known to let go of much more than imitation rocks. I've let go of promises and convictions. There have been times when my fingers slipped off the very stones of truth I treasure. And I can't tell you how many times I've expected to hit the bottom only to find myself suspended in midair, secured by a pair of nail-pierced hands.

"Try again," he urges. And so I resume.

You and I are on a great climb. The wall is high, and the stakes are higher. You took your first step the day you confessed Christ as the Son of God. He gave you his harness—the Holy Spirit. In your hands he placed a rope—his Word.

Your first steps were confident and strong, but with the journey came weariness, and with the height came fear. You lost your footing. You lost your focus. You lost your grip, and you fell. For a moment, which seemed like forever, you tumbled wildly. Out of control. Out of self-control. Disoriented. Falling.

But then the rope tightened, and the tumble ceased. You hung in the harness and found it to be strong. You gasped the rope and found it to be true. You looked at your guide and found Jesus securing your soul. With a sheepish confession, you smiled at him and he smiled at you, and the journey resumed.

And you know you are only a few more steps from the top. So whatever you do, don't quit. Though your falls are great, his strength is greater. You will make it. You will see the summit. You will stand at the top. And when you get there, the first thing you'll do is join with all the others who have made the climb and sin this verse:

"To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power, and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forever more!" (Jude 24 NIV).

# STUDY GUIDE

## Chapter One **The God Who Feeds My Soul**

1. What bread is to hunger, Jesus claims to be for the soul.”  
What does bread do for hunger?  
What does Jesus claim to do for our soul?  
In what way does Jesus want us to see him like bread?
2. “Jesus adapts himself to meet our need.”  
How does Jesus adapt himself to meet our need?  
In what ways has Jesus adapted himself to meet your need?
3. “I don’t know what is more incredible: that God packages that bread of life in the wrapper of a country carpenter or that he gives us the keys to the delivery truck.”  
Which of these two facts is more incredible to you? Why?  
What are you doing with the keys to the delivery truck? Explain.

## Chapter Two **The God of Great Grace**

1. “Logic says: ‘She doesn’t deserve it.’ Jesus says: ‘You’re right, but you don’t either.’” Why does logic say, “She doesn’t deserve it?” Have you ever thought this way? If so, explain.  
Does Jesus refute this logic? How does he respond to it? Why is this important?
2. “We cannot cleanse our own filth. We cannot remove our own sin. Our feet must be must be in his hands.”
3. Jesus is assuming the role of the servant. He will wash the grimeiest part of your life. If you let him.  
Do you think Jesus will still assume the role of the servant today? Explain.  
How does Jesus “wash the grimeiest” part of our life? What is necessary for this to Happen?
4. “We will never be cleansed until we confess we are dirty.”  
Why is it necessary to confess we are “dirty”? What does this entail?  
Have you made such a confession?  
Explain.
5. “God will never call you to do what he hasn’t already done.”  
Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?  
What is the hardest thing God has called you to do? How do you know he Called you to do it? How can you accomplish it?

## Chapter Three **The God Who Knows Your Name**

1. "Aren't we glad Christ didn't call himself the Good Cowboy?"  
What's the main difference between a shepherd and a cowboy?  
Are you glad Christ didn't call himself a Good Cowboy? Explain.
2. "We don't need a cowboy to herd us; we need a shepherd to care for us and to guide us."  
Do you know of anyone who sees God as a cowboy rather than a shepherd?  
If so, describe him or her.  
Have you ever felt like you were being "herded" rather than "shepherded" by Someone in authority? If so, what was the difference? How did you feel about it?
3. "He guides, feed, and anoints. And word has it that he won't quit until we reach the homeland."  
How does Jesus guide us today? How does he feed us? How does he anoint us?  
How do you know "he won't quit until we reach the homeland"?

## Chapter Four

### **The God Who Won't Let You Fall**

1. "I can't tell you how many times I've expected to hit the bottom only to find myself suspended in midair, secured by a pair of pierced hands."  
If you have ever had an experience such as the one Max mentions above, describe it.  
How does it give us confidence to know that we have such a God?
2. "Though you can't see our guide, you know him. You know he is strong. You know he is able to keep you from falling." How can you know your guide if you can't see him?  
How do you know God is able to keep you from falling?
3. "You are only a few more steps from the top. So whatever you do, don't quit. Though your falls are great, his strength is greater. You will make it."  
If you have ever known someone who was tempted to quit just a few steps From the top, describe what happened.  
What would tempt you to quit just a few steps from the top? How would you Overcome these temptations?

**The Compassionate Savior**  
Published by UpWords Ministries

©1996 by Max Lucado  
Edited by Karen Hill

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means-electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other-except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior permission of the publisher.

“The God Who Feeds My Soul,”  
“The God of Great Grace,”  
“The God Who Knows Your Name,” and  
“The God Who Won’t Let You Fall”  
are taken from  
*A Gentle Thunder* ©1995 by Max Lucado

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture references are from the New Century Version of the Bible, ©1987, 1988, 1991, Word Publishing

Printed in the United States of America

This electronic copy of *The Compassionate Savior* is brought to you by UpWords, the ministry of Max Lucado. UpWords is a non-profit ministry that exists because of the generosity of people like you. It is our prayer that this ministry will continue to encourage the lives of those who seek a deeper relationship with the Lord. If this material has been beneficial to your spiritual life, please prayerfully consider contributing to our ministry with prayer and financial support.

For information about UpWords’ radio, online and tape ministries featuring Max Lucado, or to contribute to UpWords, write:

UpWords  
PO Box 692170  
San Antonio, TX 78269-2170

1-800-822-9673

or visit [www.maxlucado.com](http://www.maxlucado.com)

*“The chief aim of UpWords is to create an arena in which the listener will have a personal encounter with the personality, teachings and claims of the Son of God.”*